

The Christian Life.

THE CONSOLATION.

JOHN P. LINDSAY.

As a mother stills her restless,
Soothes her tired babe to sleep;
So the father, loving, tender,
Holds us in His bosom deep.

Clouds surround us as we journey
Through the valley, lone and drear,
But His strong right arm's around us;
Angel guards are ever near—

Near to guide us lest we wander
Far away from safety's road;
Ever near to help the weary,
Tired pilgrim bear his load.

As the mother softly raises
Weary infant to her breast,
So the Father waits to lift us
Gently, sweetly to His rest.

—*Christian Advocate.*

THE MINISTRY OF PAIN.

No doubt pain is an indication of a disturbed, disordered, and to some extent unnatural condition of the human system and of the world. Naturally the machinery should run smoothly without friction or distress. Pain, as a rule, may be said to come through sin, and when the days of sin and sorrow are ended "there shall be no more pain." Nevertheless pain has its uses, and the ministry of pain is one of great importance.

Pain shows to us the emptiness of this world. No matter how much a man may have of wealth, fame, and honor, a few hours of pain can spoil it all. Resolution fails, courage departs, and man will do almost anything as a relief from pain. So the torture in past ages was used to wring secrets from unwilling lips, and most men would say anything or do anything to obtain relief from pain. Even the ordinary pains which afflict us, break down our strength, destroy our courage, and leave us helpless and spiritless beneath their affliction.

Pains admonish us concerning the past. If they are the result of excess, of carelessness, of gluttony, or reckless exposure, pain sharply warns us to sin no more in those things lest a worse thing come upon us. Pain also shows us how slender our hold is upon life. We think ourselves strong, and believe that we are able to withstand disease; we promise ourselves long life, and yet a day of pain seems to hang our lives as in a balance, and we stand in doubt, and know not what the end will be.

The natural issue of pain unless we are able to conquer it and overcome it, is in the silent slumber of the grave; and how many there are who are weaned by pain from the life to which they had so ardent-

ly clung. Afflicted and distressed they at last say, "My soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my life. I loathe it; I would not live away." They look forward to the quiet of that narrow house, where "the wicked cease from troubling," and "the weary be at rest;" and the sharpness of pain makes that rest most welcome;—they long for death and covet its sweet repose.

Especially does pain lead our thoughts beyond this world, to that land where the "inhabitant shall not say, I am sick;" where there shall be no more pain; when all disease and disorder shall be ended, and when immortality shall be put on; when in the perfect equilibrium of the immortal state, the bodies of our humiliation shall be made like unto the glorious body of our Lord; and when, through all the ages of eternity, sorrow and sighing and tears shall be no more. How glad that day will be to those who for days and years have suffered pain in this world. How precious the thought that

"There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Eternal day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

"There everlasting spring abides,
And never changing flowers;
Death, like a narrow sea, divides
That heavenly land from ours.

"Sweet fields, beyond the swelling flood,
Stand dressed in living green;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between.

"Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,
Should fright us from the shore."

—*The Christian.*

DOES YOUR ANCHOR HOLD?

A sailor in Gloucester, Mass., had been wounded in a wreck and was brought ashore. The fever was great and he was dying. His comrades gathered around him in a little fishing house, and the physician said, "He won't live long." The sailor was out of his mind until near the close. But within a few minutes of his death he looked around and called one comrade after another, bade them good-bye, and then sank off into a sleep. Finally, as it was time for his medicine again, and one of the sailors shook him and said, "Mate, how are you now?" he looked up into the eyes of his friend and said, "My anchor holds." It was the last thing he said. And when they called upon a friend of mine to take charge of the funeral service, you can imagine how powerful was the impression it made upon his hearers when he quoted the dying words, "My anchor holds."

Does your anchor hold? Can you,

when death comes, and when your friends are gathered around, just look up and say "My anchor holds?" If you cannot, prepare yourself for it now. You have this opportunity today; and then from this day watch your anchor, see that nothing in life or death shall ever separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus.—*Russell H. Conwell.*

"TO GIVE LIGHT AND TO SAVE LIFE."

That motto, deep cut upon the sides of the great Eddystone lighthouse, would be a grand one for every Christian to take to himself. The words are these: "To give light and to save life." Verily that is the Christian's mission in the world. We are to be "lights in the world, holding forth the word of life." Like some friendly beacon standing on rocky coast or at harbor entrance, we are all permitted to warn men from the evil or guide them toward the good.

And how glad we ought to be, too, that there are so many such lights to be seen. When the waves of sin have been beating high, sunken rocks of temptation have been in the way just ahead, or the winds of opposition have been driving hard, how many a voyager on life's ocean has found guidance and deliverance from the kindly rays of help that have streamed out from the presence of some consecrated Christian! Let us strive more and more to prove "lights to the world"—beacons of saving help to others.—*Gerard B. F. Hallock in New York Observer.*

PRAYER.

We are to ask in the spirit of little children for precisely what we think we need. Not that the prayers will always be granted. Denial is sometimes kinder than consent. But in God's own way the prayer of faith always receives the special individual answer.

"If our love were but more simple,
We should take Him at His word;
And our lives would all be sunshine,
In the sweetness of our Lord."

There are still in this world of ours those whose barrel of meal and cruise of oil are fed by unseen messengers, as they, God's poor, and His own wait upon Him and renew their strength. . . .

The danger is that we shall demand imperiously, instead of humbly supplicate, God's answers to our petitions. He always answers. But we do not always recognize His dealing with us as an answer. Often His "no" is better for us than His "yes" would be, for it is a no which will change to yes in the development of our spiritual nature, or in the heavenly home. It is always the best answer when He gives us to feel that the kingdom of heaven is